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LETTER DATED 30 AUGUST 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On the instructions of the President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I bring the following to your attention.

The re-strangulation of Sarajevo intensifies and the situation grows more critical, while the call of President Alija Izetbegovic (27 July 1994) for an emergency session of the Security Council on this urgent issue remains unheeded. In particular, the humanitarian lifeline for Sarajevo, the "Blue Route", remains closed, and concurrently, air deliveries remain largely uncertain and ineffective owing to Serbian sniping.

This is a systematic attempt by the Karadzic forces to place Sarajevo at their exclusive mercy and to reassert the deadly stranglehold which had been loosened since the NATO ultimatum.

The Blue Route remains closed because of the decision of UNPROFOR to in fact shut it down. Was it necessary for UNPROFOR to shut down the Blue Route and become an unwitting tool in this reassertive Serb stranglehold?

The Blue Route that can be travelled in and out of Sarajevo is entirely within territory controlled by the Government and army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina or UNPROFOR. UNPROFOR has chosen to close its section of the route solely because Karadzic's forces (in their increasing belligerence, designed to amplify their rejection of the peace plan) had indicated that they would no longer tolerate the operation of the route, and that they were prepared to shell and strike at the route if it remained open. The section of the Blue Route that is now shut down is entirely within the "safe area" and "exclusion zone" of Sarajevo. Therefore, any attack by the Karadzic forces against the Blue Route would be in contravention to numerous Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 770 (1992), 824 (1993) and 836 (1993), as well as the NATO ultimatum. Instead, UNPROFOR has chosen to shut down the Blue Route and effectively achieve a result for the Karadzic Serbs that would otherwise trigger NATO air strikes.

Furthermore, attacks on UNPROFOR and the civilian population of Sarajevo by Karadzic's forces have intensified. The response of the UNPROFOR command to the renewed aggression has been to equivocate the actions of the victims with those of the aggressors; of the host sovereign State and Member of the United Nations with those of self-proclaimed ethnic warlords and fascists.

We must remind the UNPROFOR command of the moral and legal consequences of its attempts at equivocation, most specifically, its written message of 10 August 1994 threatening the sovereign Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Government and the army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina have the obligation and duty to defend all of its territory and citizens. This responsibility and right, of a sovereign nation, is ingrained in international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Rather than threatening unwarranted action against the legitimate Government and army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNPROFOR should use such NATO ultimatums to maintain the opening of the Blue Route (or to achieve the complete and final lifting of the siege of Sarajevo). It is indeed unfortunate and strange behaviour when UNPROFOR, on the one hand, menacingly exhibits its sword to the more vulnerable victims, those undertaking the defence of innocents, and the legitimate Government and United Nations Member State; while, on the other hand, it conspicuously sheathes its sword when facing challenges from those that not only seek to victimize a civilian population, but also obstruct the UNPROFOR mandate and threaten the lives of its personnel.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative